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Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 03887 221333Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 AID-05
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /088 W
----------041905 221442Z /40
R 221204Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4574
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, ET
SUBJ: ETHIOPIAN VIEWS ON REFUGEES

SUMMARY: IN MESSAGE TO COMMEMORATE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF ORGANIZATION OF AFRICA UNITY (OAU) AFRICA REFUGEE DAY, JUNE 20, PROVISIONAL MILITARY ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL (PMAC) CHAIRMAN, LTCOL MENGISTU HAILE MARIAM APPEALED TO OAU MEMBERS WHO HAD NOT DONE SO, TO RATIFY OAU CONVENTION ON AFRICAN REFUGEES AND FOR ALL MEMBER STATES TO MAKE SOLEMN PLEDGE TO REFRAIN FROM EXPLOITING REFUGEES, TEMPORARILY RESIDING IN THEIR TERRITORIES, BY USING THEM AS PAWNS TO FURTHER OWN FOREIGN OR DOMESTIC POLICY OBJECTIVES. HE ALSO URGED BONA FIDE ETHIOPIAN REFUGEES TO RETURN WITHOUT FEAR OF RETRIBUTION. MENGISTU MESSAGE FOLLOWS SERIES OF PUBLIC INTERVIEWS PAST WEEK WITH FIVE "REPENTANT" YOUTHS, ONE OF WHOM ALLEGEDLY FORMER ERITREAN REFUGEE IN SOMALIA, WHO RETURNED HIGHLY CRITICAL OF TREATMENT RECEIVED WHILE THERE.
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PAGE 02 ADDIS 03887 221333Z

END SUMMARY

1. AS FURTHER INDICATION OF GROWING ETHIOPIAN SENSITIVITY TO HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, JUNE 21 ETHIOPIAN HERALD GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO PMAC CHAIRMAN MENGISTU MESSAGE TO OAU SECGEN ETEKI ON THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF OAU AFRICAN REFUGEE DAY. NOTING NUMBER OF AFRICAN STATES THAT HAVE

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

RATIFIED OAU REFUGEE CONVENTION "REGRETTABLY LOW",
MENGISTU CALLED ON OAU MEMBERS TO RATIFY CONVENTION WITH-
OUT FURTHER DELAY AND PROVIDE ADEQUATE ASSISTANCE TO
AFRICAN REFUGEES. HE ALSO URGED OAU MEMBERS TO MAKE SOLEMN
PLEDGE TO REFRAIN FROM EXPLOITING REFUGEES, TEMPORARILY
RESIDING IN TERRITORIES, BY USING THEM AS PAWNS TO FURTHER
OWN FOREIGN OR DOMESTIC POLICY OBJECTIVES. TO ILLUSTRATE
ETHIOPIA'S POSITION, MENGISTU ASSURED "BONA FIDE" REFUGEES
WHO LEFT ETHIOPIA BEFORE OR AFTER REVOLUTION THEY FREE TO
RETURN WITHOUT FEAR OF RETRIBUTION. IN CONCLUSION, MENGISTU
NOTED SPECIAL CASES IN ZIMBABWE, NAMIBIA, AND SOUTH AFRICA,
WHERE REFUGEES UNABLE TO RETURN HOME, AND APPEALED TO OAU
MEMBERS TO REDOUBLE EFFORTS TO LIBERATE THESE COUNTRIES.

2. PUBLIC INTERVIEW PREVIOUS WEEK WITH ERITREAN YOUTH REPATRIATED
FROM SOMALIA, CALCULATED TO "EXPOSE" FRAUDULENT
SOMALI, AND BY INTERVIEWER'S IMPLICATION, SUDANESE
ACTIVITIES IN U.N. HIGH COMMISSION ON REFUGEES
(UNHCR) CAMPS IN BOTH COUNTRIES. ERITREAN YOUTH, IDENTIFIED
AS KIDANE KIBROM, ALLEGEDLY STAYED IN HARGEISA AND EL GARIS
ETHIOPIAN REFUGEE CAMPS TOTAL 14 MONTHS. WHILE THERE HE
CLAIMS 118 ETHIOPIANS CONDUCTED MONTH-LONG HUNGER STRIKE
BECAUSE DEMANDS FOR JOBS OR TRAINING NOT ACCEDED TO BY
SOMALIS. CONDITIONS DEPICTED AS POOR, BUT IMPROVED GREATLY
FEW DAYS BEFORE VISIT OF GENEVA INSPECTION DELEGATION, AS
FACADE AND THEN REVERTED TO FORMER STATE. EXTRAPOLATING
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PAGE 03 ADDIS 03887 221333Z

FROM KIDANE RESPONSES, INTERVIEWER ACCUSED SOMALI GOVT
OF SUBMITTING "FANTASTIC" REPORTS TO UNHCR CLAIMING
NEEDS AND HUMAN DIGNITIES OF PEOPLE IN HER TERRITORY SAFE-
GUARDED, BUT "IN FACT" UNHCR PROVIDED FUNDS USED FOR "OTHER
PURPOSES", WHILE REFUGEES KEPT UNDER DEPLORABLE LIVING
CONDITIONS. SUDANESE LEASERS ACCUSED BY INTERVIEWER OF
SAME FRAUDULENT ACTIVITIES.

3. COMMENT: FROM ADDIS PERSPECTIVE MENGISTU MESSAGE TO
OAU APPEARS THINLY VEILED CRITICISM OF SUDANESE AND SOMALI
REFUGEE PRACTICES AND SINCERE APPEAL FOR ETHIOPIAN REFUGEES
TO RETURN HOME. INTERVIEW WITH REPATRIATED REFUGEE PROBABLY
LOW-KEY ATTEMPT TO COUNTER RECENT SOMALI AND SUDANESE
AD HOMINEM PROPAGANDA EFFORTS, DEPICTING MENGISTU REGIME
AS BLOODTHIRSTY AND INHUMAN.
TIENKEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, ANNIVERSARY MESSAGES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Errors: N/A
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From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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To: STATE
Type: TE
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